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Chapter 1

[image]

Squirrelflight's heart pounded in her chest as she fought for breath. Her race with the ghostly spirits of her deceased Clanmates had left her exhausted, and her legs ached. She skidded to a halt in front of a tree, whose trunk loomed into the sky, never seeming to end. She heard pawsteps behind her and spun around to defend herself, but was surprised to see Willowshine, the former RiverClan medicine cat, standing in front of her.
"Squirrelflight," she whispered, "I know where Bramblestar is. But you must follow me, quickly, we do not have much time."
"Willowshine, you scared the daylight out of me!" Squirrelflight exclaimed. She looked up at the dark night sky that harbored no stars nor the moon. *Not that there is any,* she thought to herself.
"I'm sorry, Squirrelflight, but we really must hurry," Willowshine urged. "Ashfur has Bramblestar, and I'm afraid if you do not come soon, Bramblestar will not make it out alive."
Squirrelflight's stomach dropped in dismay. Taking a deep breath, she responded, "Alright, Willowshine. Show me the way."
Willowshine nodded. She turned around, signaling with her tail for Squirrelflight to follow her. Soon, they were racing through the trees, their pawsteps pounding on the earth.Then Willowshine slowed to a stop, Squirrelflight doing the same beside her.
Looking ahead to the mound of earth that seemed to grow out of the damp earth, Squirrelflight saw Ashfur sitting in the center, a group of dead Clan cats' spirits gathered around him. Ashfur's icy-blue eyes gleamed malignantly, and his dark gray fur spotted with even darker gray spots shone in the gloom.
Squirrelflight padded up to the hill until she was almost face-to-face with Ashfur. His eyes narrowed as she glared at him.
"Ashfur," she snarled. "Let Bramblestar and the others go."
Ashfur's face contorted with an emotion that was- Contempt? Hate? Squirrelflight couldn't tell.
"Squirrelflight," he growled, "I want to make a deal with you."
Squirrelflight glared at him angrily. "A deal? What kind of deal?" she hissed.

Ashfur snorted at Squirrelflight. "If you stay here with me, I will let your precious Clanmates go," he spat. "If you refuse..." He glanced behind him at Bramblestar, his dark brown fur matted and unkempt. "There will be consequences," he rumbled, looking back at Squirrelflight.
Squirrelflight stared at him. Stay? With you? I could never... she thought to herself. "What kind of consequences?" she growled.
Ashfur's eyes widened, his pupils shrinking into an almost venomous glare. "Bramblestar will not return to ThunderClan... or to anyone," he snarled.
Squirrelflight's heart dropped in her chest. He's going to kill Bramblestar? she thought in despair. ThunderClan cannot go without a leader.. And if he kills Bramblestar, he will most likely kill me too, and StarClan will never return. It had been bad enough living without their warrior ancestors for a few moons, but if StarClan was gone forever, how could the Clans- and the warrior code- survive?
Squirrelflight sighed. It seems as if this is the only way, she thought. She closed her eyes for a moment before looking back at Ashfur, whose malignant stare was as cold as ever.
"All right, Ashfur," she meowed slowly. "If you let them go, I will stay with you."
"Forever?" he whispered, his eyes widening into a surprised gaze.
"Forever," she murmured.
Ashfur stared at Squirrelflight for a moment, seeming to process Squirrelflight's response. Then he turned towards the spirit cats that surrounded him and yowled, "Go. Leave us in peace and return to your Clans."
Squirrelflight watched as the ghostly forms of the deceased Clan cats raced past her in a blur. Bramblestar was the last to leave, and she saw Shadowsight, Rootspring, and Bristlefrost leading him away from the mound to safety.
Turning back towards Ashfur, Squirrelflight stepped up to the mound and sat on the damp earth beside him.

Chapter 2

[image]

Bramblestar raced through the trees, trying to find something, anything, *that gave signs of the living world.* He knew he wasn't dreaming; everything that had happened had been all too real. He skidded to a stop and looked around the clearing he'd ended up in, his breath coming in short gasps. It was eerily quiet, and he could feel eyes watching him, though he could not see them. His heart thudded in his chest, and it seemed loud enough to fill the entire forest with its sound.

Bushes rustled behind him and Bramblestar turned his head towards the sound quickly. The forest became quiet again, and as Bramblestar turned to head away from the clearing into the forest, something leaped at him from the shadows.

Bramblestar yowled as he felt himself being tossed to the ground. He looked up to see a she-cat with dark ginger and black fur, with a mix of white between the dark splotches of fur. Her yellow eyes were the only thing bright about the ghostly she-cat.

Bramblestar recognized her from the Great Battle- the battle between the living and the dead- this cat was Mapleshade. She had sworn vengeance on the Clans many moons before he was born, and she had kept her promise during some of the darkest moons the Clans had faced.

"What are you doing?" Bramblestar spat.

Mapleshade stared at him. Her face contorted with hate. "What should have been done a long time ago," she snarled.

Bramblestar struggled under her grasp. Slipping out from underneath her, he swiped a claw at her flank, which she dodged quickly. She leaped at him again, and Bramblestar crouched down, ready to defend himself. Then a heavy weight landed on his back, and he felt a sharp pain in the back of his neck before everything went dark.

Chapter 3

[image]

Bristlefrost's heart raced as she raced through the forest, her loud pawsteps resonating in the damp earth behind her. She glanced over her shoulder and saw a familiar cat with dark grey fur and emerald eyes following her, and skidded to a stop.
"Willowshine," she panted, "I thought you were someone else. Someone out to kill me."
Willowshine's gaze widened. "I'm so sorry, Bristlefrost. I didn't know you were afraid."
Bristlefrost sighed in relief. She looked into Willowshine's eyes and realized that her eyes were not.... They weren't normal. She seemed to be staring at nothing, and her expression was blank.
"Willowshine," Bristlefrost whispered, "Are you okay?"
Suddenly a voice sounded in the trees. "Bristlefrost!" it called.
Bristlefrost turned towards the sound.
"Rootspring?" she called back.
Pawsteps sounded in the trees and a light brown pelt showed in the undergrowth.
"Rootspring!" Bristlefrost gasped. "Thank StarClan you're okay." She stepped forward as Rootspring skidded to a halt in the clearing.
"Are you both okay?" he panted. "It feels like I've spent moons trying to find you."
"I'm okay," Bristlefrost meowed. She looked towards Willowshine, who was staring off into the trees.
"I'm..." she began. "I'm okay too."
Rootspring seemed to accept that answer, turning back towards Bristlefrost, anxiety showing in his eyes.
"We need to figure out how to get back," he murmured. "I don't trust Willowshine. She seems.. Off."
Bristlefrost glanced at Willowshine over her shoulder. Willowshine was still staring straight at her with that same expressionless look. She turned back to Rootspring. "I think you're right. She's been staring at me for a while now," she whispered.
Looking over her shoulder again, Bristlefrost was surprised to see Willowshine gone.

"Where did she go?" she whispered. She looked back towards Rootspring to see him gone, too.
She spun around anxiously. "Willowshine?" she called. "Rootspring? Where are you?"
The stench of blood burned her nostrils. She turned around to see Rootspring on the ground, crimson red blood flowing from his neck onto the damp ground underneath.
Bristlefrost's heart dropped in her chest. She slowly made her way towards Rootspring's body, her heart pounding. Crouching down in front of him, she whispered, "Rootspring.. Oh, StarClan, no!"
The undergrowth rustled behind her. She spun around to see Willowshine, whose cream-colored paws were now stained with blood. Her eyes still seemed to stare at nothing, and she took a slow step forward, her eyes still not giving anything away.
"Willowshine," Bristlefrost whispered. "What are you doing?"
Willowshine didn't answer. She continued to move towards Bristlefrost until their noses were almost touching.
She leapt at Bristlefrost and swiped her claws at her neck. Bristlefrost yowled in agony as she thudded onto the ground. Black spots ate at the edge of her vision, until eventually the darkness had consumed everything.

Chapter 4

[image]

Squirrelflight shifted her paws uncomfortably. She was still sitting beside Ashfur on the mound of damp earth, and she was starting to shiver due to the cold air that whispered through the trees.
Ashfur stood up and motioned with his tail for Squirrelflight to follow him. She got to her paws and followed him through the dark undergrowth as he padded slowly between the trees.
After what had felt like moons of walking, they arrived in a clearing. It shone with an ominous light, the mist swirling around the trees like a ghost.
She glanced around the clearing, confusion showing in her eyes. "Why did you bring me here?" she asked.
Ashfur didn't respond. He seemed to be waiting for someone, and Squirrelflight stiffened as the undergrowth in front of them rustled. Two cats emerged from the bushes; Mapleshade and Willowshine. They were dragging something with them. Squirrelflight gasped in horror as she recognized Rootspring, Bristlefrost, and Bramblestar, their fur matted with blood and fresh wounds stretching across their bodies.
Ashfur turned towards Squirrelflight. "You told me you would stay as long as I didn't hurt them," he said slowly. "I did not hurt them. Willowshine and Mapleshade killed them."
Squirrelflight's face contorted into hate and disgust. Her emerald eyes gleamed with anger and grief, and her claws flexed in the ground.
Ashfur reared up on his hind legs and forced Squirrelflight to the ground.
"Let me go, fox-heart," she snarled.
Ashfur's eyes narrowed into thin slits. His gaze became venomous as he bent down to stare into Squirrelflight's eyes.
"Bramblestar was an incompetent leader," he growled. "He was not deserving of leadership. Neither are you."
He stared at her for a moment longer before he stood up. Squirrelflight stayed on the ground, too terrified to move.
Ashfur raised a paw, unsheathing his claws in the process, before

bringing it down on Squirrelflight's throat. He watched coldly as Squirrelflight writhed on the ground, gasping for air. Thick crimson blood flowed from her neck as she struggled to keep her consciousness.

Squirrelflight was able to mutter one last insult before all went black.

"Snake-heart," she choked.

A/N

Hello! I'm sad to say that this story probably won't have any more parts, unless I find something to do with Shadowsight. I really enjoyed writing this and I hope everyone who read it liked it too! Please read my other fanfictions, I'm very proud of them! <3